

**WDFW Steelhead Management Plans – Region 5
Coast Stratum Workgroup
Summary**

Workgroup Meetings:

• March 3, 2015 – Cathlamet Council Room	• August 10, 2015 – River St. Room - Cathlamet
• April 29, 2015 – River St Room – Cathlamet	•
• May 19, 2015 – Cathlamet Council Room	•
• June 9, 2015 – River St. Room - Cathlamet	•
• July 15, 2015 – River St. Room - Cathlamet	•

Workgroup Members:

Calvin Goodell	Chinook Nation
Dotty Prescott	CCA/Fish First
Richard Casapulla	CCA
Hal Mahnke	Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group
Bob Bailey	Lower Columbia Fly Fishers
Rob Allen	
Tim Whitesel	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Kyle Hanson	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Michael Martin	
Dave Hopkins	NW Steelheaders
Chris Vandenberg	WA/OR Farm Bureau
Pat Frazier	Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board
Ron Nanney	Wild Steelhead Coalition/Willapa Anglers
Ray Leibe	
Bruce Peterson	
David Allred	
Nick Larson	Trout Unlimited
Jake Crawford	Native Fish Society

Workgroup Member	Meetings Attended									
	3/3/15	4/29/15	5/19/15	6/9/15	7/15/15	8/10/15				
Calvin Goodell	X			X						
Dotty Prescott	X			X	X					
Richard Casapulla	X	X	X	X	X					
Hal Mahnke		X	X	X	X	X				
Bob Bailey	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Rob Allen	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Tim Whitesel	X	X	X		X	X				
Kyle Hanson	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Michael Martin	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Dave Hopkins	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Chris Vandenberg	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Pat Frazier	X			X	X	X				
Ron Nanney	X	X		X	X	X				
Ray Leibe	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Bruce Peterson	X	X	X	X	X	X				
David Allred	X	X	X	X		X				
Nick Larson	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Jake Crawford	X	X	X	X	X	NA				

*Substitutes sent

S = called in sick

NA= not available

Public Attending	Meetings Attended									
	3/3/15									
Peter	X									
Renee	X									

Topics Covered by Workgroup:

WDFW solicited input from the workgroup on the following areas of the Steelhead Management Plan:

<i>Natural Production – Wild Stock Gene Banks</i>	4
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Summary of Workgroup Discussions:

Natural Production – Wild Stock Gene Banks

ISSUE: Establish Network of Wild Stock Gene Banks. Establish a network of wild stock gene banks across the state where wild stocks are largely protected from the effects of hatchery programs. At least one wild stock gene bank will be established for each major population group in each steelhead DPS. Each gene bank established will have the following characteristics and management:

- a. Each stock selected for inclusion in the gene bank must be sufficiently abundant and productive to be self-sustaining in the future.
- b. No releases of hatchery-origin steelhead will occur in streams where spawning of the stock occurs, or in streams used exclusively by that stock for rearing.
- c. Fisheries can be conducted if wild steelhead management objectives are met as well as any necessary federal ESA determinations.

Discussion:

- Need some information on angler days to make a decision
- Action item: Need to get miles of public access – number of access sites
- Limiting harvest fisheries may move anglers to other areas with listed fish
- Action item: fix Elochman barrier language – 400 feet – Cindy

Grays/Chinook Winter Steelhead Gene Bank

Pros

- Has the greatest miles of spawning habitat – 77 miles
- Have a failing hatchery – infrastructure
- Primary population – consistent with cascade and gorge
- Would be no hatchery plants in this system after transition to Beaver Creek – there are ecological competition from other species
- HSRG recommended integrated steelhead program
- If Grays Hatchery closes, would have a hatchery free zone for all species
- Recommended by HSRG
- Potential increase to local economy from a catch and release fishery on wild fish.
- Number of “fishable” days on Grays is less due to high turbidity in winter.

Cons

- Would have a large impact on the sport harvest fishery
- Effective segregated program – fish return to the hatchery – unsure how this is on the Elochoman
- Economic impact with loss of harvest fishery – local community
- Active logging rotation in upper Grays, with harvesting of 3rd growth – continued high levels of sediment input. – More habitat, but larger degradation impacts.

Other

- Eliminating hatchery fish would not have an impact on the mainstem fishery because the fishery mostly occurs of the WF Grays and downstream

Elochoman/Skamokawa Winter Steelhead Gene Bank

Pros

- Hatchery fish bypassing the hatchery
- Less harvest per release

Cons

- Would have a large impact on the sport harvest fishery
- Where/how to get hatchery fish for Grays River
- Economic impact with loss of harvest fishery – local community
- Development along the shoreline – reduces wild habitat

Other

- Consider option for new weir for steelhead higher in the system
- There are more fish harvested in the Elochoman versus the Grays
- One option would be Beaver Creek sill for a new weir – just below Beaver Creek Hatchery

Mill/Abernathy/Germany Winter Steelhead Gene Bank

Pros

- Primary population – consistent with Cascade and Gorge
- Uncertainty in funding for the research program – if you don't choose this, this might occur anyway, and then you have two gene banks because you chose Grays or Elochoman
- This would be a good choice for a gene bank and continuing the research program – as long as the program does not reduce the genetics of the wild fish
- Already intensive monitoring program in this system
- Put weirs on these creeks to remove hatchery fish
- Hatchery fish have the same timing as the wild fish
- Good land use compared to other two – landowners not harvesting trees in the upper areas as much as other two
- Least likely hatchery influence over time

Cons

- Would have a large impact on the sport harvest fishery
- Would create a conflict with AFTC research program – unique situation for the state – seems to be a valuable program – would lose the research results
- Hatchery fish have the same timing as the wild fish

Other

5/19/15	Gene Bank Recommendation Options			
Name	Grays	Eloch	MAG	
Calvin Goodell				
Dotty Prescott				
Richard Casapulla	2	3	1	
Hal Mahnke	2	3	1	
Bob Bailey	3	2	1	
Rob Allen	1	2	3	
Tim Whitesel	0	0	0	
Kyle Hanson	1	3	2	
Craig Brown				
Michael Martin	1	3	2	
Dave Hopkins	1	3	2	
Chris Vandenberg	1	3	2	
Pat Frazier				
Ron Nanney				
Ray Leibe	3	2	1	
Bruce Peterson	2	3	1	
David Allred	3	2	1	
Nick Larson	2	3	1	
Jake Crawford	1	2	3	
	6	0	7	
6/9/15	Gene Bank Recommendation Options*			
Name	Grays		MAG	
Calvin Goodell				
Dotty Prescott				
Richard Casapulla			X	
Hal Mahnke	X			
Bob Bailey	X			
Rob Allen	X			
Tim Whitesel				
Kyle Hanson	X			
Craig Brown				
Michael Martin	X			
Dave Hopkins			X	
Chris Vandenberg	X			
Pat Frazier				
Ron Nanney	X			
Ray Leibe			X	

Bruce Peterson			X	
David Allred			X	
Nick Larson			X	
Jake Crawford	X			
Total	8		6	
7/15/15 – Final Gene bank Recommendation**				
Name	Grays		MAG	
Calvin Goodell				
Dotty Prescott				
Richard Casapulla	X			
Hal Mahnke	X			
Bob Bailey	X			
Rob Allen	X			
Tim Whitesel			X	
Kyle Hanson	X			
Craig Brown				
Michael Martin	X			
Dave Hopkins			X	
Chris Vandenberg	X			
Pat Frazier				
Ron Nanney	X			
Ray Leibe			X	
Bruce Peterson			X	
David Allred			X	
Nick Larson			X	
Jake Crawford	X			
	9		6	

*{ Workgroup members in attendance at 5/19/15 meeting agreed that only members present at 1 or both of gene bank discussions (4/29 & 5/19) be able to formally vote on Gene bank recommendation. Other members (in red font) who attended at the 6/9/15 meeting were asked to provide input on pros/cons and their opinion, but did not vote. }

**After discussion of additional gene bank information and artificial production options, work group members were asked to make a final vote of gene bank recommendation preference.

Comments:

- Would like to see research continue at AFTC – if Grays or Elochoman becomes gene bank, would have two gene banks if program loses funding/closes at AFTC
- MAG – Abernathy fish going into Germany Creek – MAG should be gene bank
- Skamokawa Creek is getting a lot of strays from Elochoman

- If MAG is gene bank – funding question at hatchery – more changes have to be made if MAG is gene bank versus Grays
- Grays may have a higher probability of increasing and supporting a fishery
- Few people fish MAG – having Grays/Eloch as gene bank would affect the fishery more - affects the economics more
- Concern about making a decision on gene bank prior to knowing what fishery regulations would be
- Could we increase late coho production if we eliminate steelhead? Likely not.
- Can we move the production from the gene bank to another stream? Possibly, yes.
- Increasing production on Grays/Elochoman transferred would require more effort so that the population in the non-gene bank river would not be increased
- Can we put more fish in the Naselle? Would be difficult – have to coordinate with other Region. Have not yet identified their gene bank options.
- Need to ask ourselves whether we value the information we are getting from the research at AFTC.
- Access:
 - Grays has best boating access
 - Grays has the best access to bank angling
 - Access is ok Germany and Abernathy
- Could the Grays be segmented into above the Canyon and lower river?
 - No – because winters spawn and rear in areas below canyon as well and hatchery winters can get above the canyon.
- Are there opportunities to mitigate with increased hatchery programs along the coast? Would be difficult – have to coordinate with other Region. Have not yet identified their gene bank options.
- Not enough information on how soon/feasible implementation of a gene bank is on MAG.
 - 6/9/15 Several members concerned about lack of information on how soon/feasible implementation of a gene bank is on MAG.
- Update from Kyle Hanson on 7/15/15
 - AFTC program funded through next year (12/31/2016)
 - Annual proposal to BPA for renewed funding.
 - Unclear what a decision to designate MAG as a gene bank would have on the program. Would need to become a policy decision at a higher level between USFWS and WDFW.

Escapement Goal Discussion – Thomas presentation on monitoring & BRP

- Support research to continue refining monitoring methods.
- Continue current efforts using best available methods now.

Natural Production - Workgroup Conclusions/Recommendations:

OPTIONS considered by workgroup

- 1) Grays/Chinook population should be designated as gene bank for winter steelhead.
- 2) Elochoman/Skamokawa population should be designated as gene bank for winter steelhead.

3) Mill/Abernathy/Germany (MAG) population should be designated as gene bank for winter steelhead.

Final Recommendations:

- Elochoman/Skamokawa population should not be considered for designation as a gene bank.
- No consensus on choice of Grays/Chinook vs. MAG population as a gene bank
 - Work group split: Grays (9) v. MAG (6) as of 7/15/15

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Artificial Production – Steelhead Program Options

Discussion:

- Points from “Considerations for the use of segregated vs. integrated steelhead hatcheries in the Lower Columbia Region” document – covered by Thomas Buehrens (7/15/15)
- Why would we consider using segregated programs if that is what got us here in the first place? Seems like integrated would be better.
- Idea behind Oregon implementation of wild broodstock program was to extend fisheries later in the season and produce fish that came back later.
- Naselle ran an integrated program for about 5 years. Very difficult to run on a small basin/population. Problems with collecting enough wild fish to ensure genetic diversity in the program. Eventually was terminated.
 - Requires collection of broodstock, without collection facilities may need hook and line efforts which can be difficult.
- Hatchery by hatchery crosses that do survive to adults are now included as “wild” fish regardless of segregated or integrated.
- Hatchery by hatchery crosses from segregated programs that survive as juveniles, but not to adults can create competition effects for wild juveniles.
- At the basic level – segregated and integrated programs are only terms, both require proper implementation.
- Determining the goal of the hatchery program is important – segregated are more often used for harvest and integrated more often used for conservation, but not entirely.
- AHA modeling exercises – Eric Kinne
 - Lots of questions about how the model works
 - CRC data reporting not very good
 - Options
 - Going to all winters
 - Varying numbers of summers vs. winters
 - Eric will develop a table with a series of options for consideration at next meeting.
- Are there things that can be done to create a better product, rather than just increasing plant sizes? Potentially, reviewed recommendations from Lewis/Washougal/Salmon workgroup.
- Politics of decision need to be considered. Removal of hatchery fish on Grays and removal of summer steelhead on Elochoman may be hard for local public to accept.
- Suggestion that CRC card reporting declined when drop boxes went away.
 - Could we find better ways to do that – hatchery drop boxes – smart phones app.

Grays/Chinook-

- Could consider an integrated program on the Grays River with acclimation facility – would require ability to collect wild fish for broodstock.

Elochoman/Skamokawa –

- More flexibility on Elochoman because it is a contributing population. Have more allowable impacts on the wild population within HSRG standards.
- Summer-run fishing issues
 1. CRC data could be underreported – however expansion does try and account for this.
 - Also, summers caught in Nov/Dec would be counted as “winters” on CRC
 2. Survival may be low
 3. Acclimation may be an issue
 4. Have now changed some operational issues at Beaver Creek – longer acclimation, running the collection pond in the summer.
 5. Some don't fish after May or early June because of low water issues
 6. Good fishery in May and early fall with first part of June sometimes being good
 7. Could also be predation issues affecting juvenile survival
- To increase harvest rates – should increase public access/boat ramp
- Ideas for release site of excess hatchery steelhead: Lake Sacajawea- or other areas.
- Do we keep summer steelhead plants on the Elochoman?
 1. Many feel this is an important and good program.
 2. If summer program is eliminated would want to maximize winter production.
- Issues with Public Access
 1. Access can be limited on Elochoman – should work to expand access.- particularly directly below Beaver Creek.
 2. Dollar hole to Foster Road bridge would be good drift boat access.
 - Areas above this are not really drift boatable.
 - Explore options for launches in these areas – i.e, Dollar Hole and Foster Rd. Bridge.
 - Is endorsement fee funding an option for this? Should investigate this.
 3. Investigate options for maintaining access and conservation easements with endorsement fee funds.
 4. Potential for access at lower Skamokawa across from fairgrounds – dike runs all the way up to water diversion that would provide bank access.
 5. Boat ramp on lower Skamokawa provides access to tidewater area.

Mill/Abernathy/Germany–

- No comments

Artificial Production - Workgroup Conclusions/Recommendations:

Short Term:

Grays/Chinook:

1. If MAG is designated a gene bank, maintain the current 40K winter (segregated) program on the Grays River.

Elochoman/Skamokawa:

2. If Grays River is designated a gene bank – transfer winter steelhead production from Grays Hatchery to Elochoman/Skamokawa population.

Options

- a. 130K W/ 30K S (segregated programs)
 - b. Prioritize capital improvements at Beaver Creek Hatchery to facilitate the transfer of this program from Grays River Hatchery.
 - c. Consider using CRSSE funding for this need.
3. If MAG is designated a gene bank, maintain the current 120K production level on the Elochoman –
 - a. Current split 90 K W / 30 K S (segregated).
 4. Group recommends maintaining a segregated summer steelhead program on the Elochoman.
 5. Explore acclimation sites higher in basin for steelhead releases that includes collection ability (i.e. Clear Creek) to spread out fishing opportunity to areas with more access.
 6. Group recommends not planting any hatchery steelhead on Skamokawa Creek.
 7. Public access can be limited on Elochoman – should work to expand access, particularly directly below Beaver Creek.
 - a. Work to secure long term access agreement or acquire property
 - b. Improve pathway's for access to this area.
 - 8.

Mill/Abernathy/Germany:

9. If Grays River is designated a gene bank – maintain existing research program at AFTC.

Hatcheries:

1. Volitional release strategies should be continued to reduce residualism issues with hatchery programs.
 - a. Undersized fish vs. oversized fish – remove these fish from release or release in a location of low impact.
 - b. Implement protocols to reduce the number of undersized and oversized fish.
2. Hatchery evaluation should be increased with the goal of improving performance of hatchery stocks relative to harvest opportunities, while meeting or exceeding conservation objectives.

- a. Evaluate programs on the following:
 - i. In-hatchery performance (quality smolts)
 - ii. Fishery contribution
 - iii. Overall survival (smolt to adult returns “SAR”)
 - 1. Hatchery returns
 - 2. Harvest
 - 3. Natural spawn
 - 4. Stray rates
- b. Goal: Identify optimal program size and hatchery protocols to produce high quality smolts that meet program objectives and are consistent with WDFW policies.
- c. Determine capital improvements needed.
- d. Consider working with and/or utilizing information coming from research facilities such as the Oregon Hatchery Research Center, AFTC, NOAA Manchester lab.

Long Term:

- 1. WDFW should work to improve the issues with the current segregated winter steelhead stock (chamber’s creek).
 - a. Compressed return timing
 - b. Survival rate
 - c. Catchability
 - d. Small size
 - e. Maturation status
- 2. WDFW should explore the feasibility of developing a wild broodstock program for winter steelhead on the Elochoman River with a harvest objective.
- 3. WDFW should explore the feasibility of developing (i.e., Kalama) or using (i.e., Big Creek) a locally derived segregated steelhead stock from lower Columbia wild winter natural returning fish.

Fisheries Management – Proposed Regulation Changes

Discussion:

- Discussion of closed unless open rule that has been implemented.
 - Let us know of areas that have been closed that used to be open and provide a meaningful fishery.
- Regulation structure – 3-Tier concept: Thomas reviewed
- Hook size restriction – is there an Oregon regulation?

Grays/Chinook-

- Bait restrictions February on
- Hook size – Oregon regulations

Elochoman/Skamokawa –

- Are there options to open Elochoman earlier in May to access summer steelhead when conditions are better?
 1. Currently open earlier by one week as implemented in 2015 rule change.
 2. Balance between opening too early and impacting wild winter steelhead and juveniles and catching early arriving summers.
 3. What about an April 15th opener similar to EF Lewis/Washougal in lower river.
- Need for consistency of rules between Elochoman/Skamokawa
 1. At what size tributary do we draw the line for closures?

Mill/Abernathy/Germany–

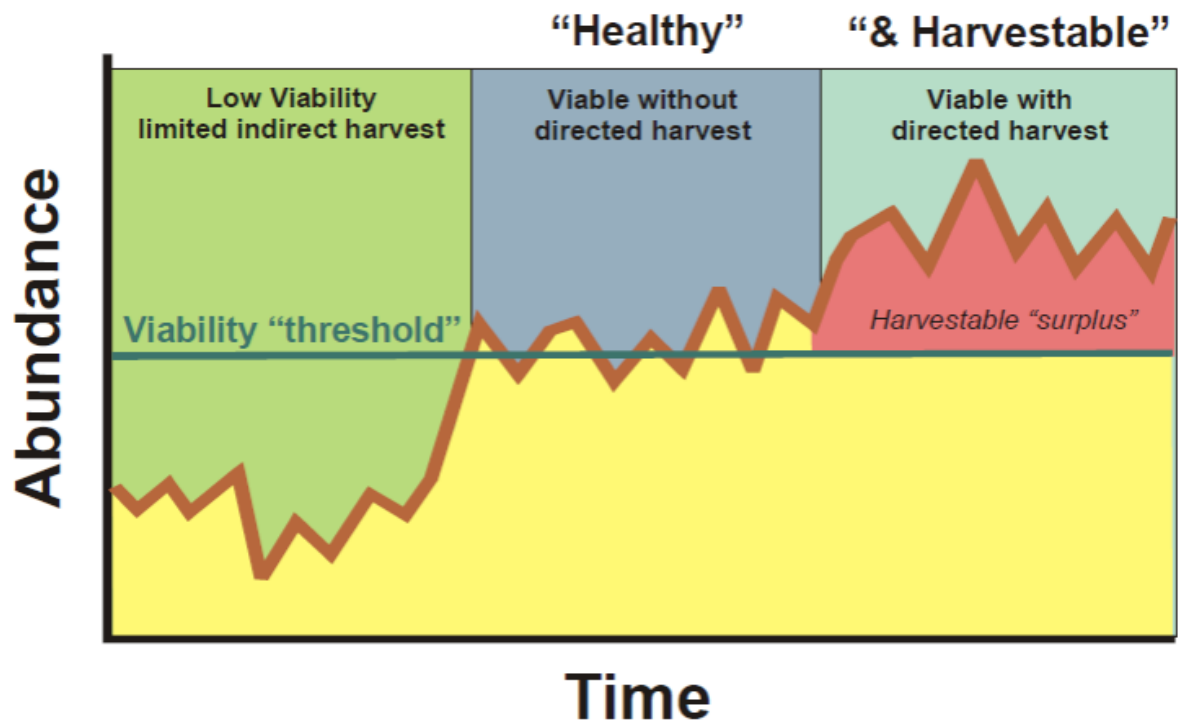


Figure 4-3. Example recovery trajectory illustrating healthy and harvest goals of this Plan.

Fisheries Management - Workgroup Conclusions/Recommendations:

Short Term:

Grays/Chinook:

1.

Elochoman/Skamokawa:

2.

Mill/Abernathy/Germany:

3.

Long Term:

Grays/Chinook:

1.

Elochoman/Skamokawa:

2.

Mill/Abernathy/Germany:

3.

Regulatory Compliance – Enforcement Issues

Discussion:



Regulatory Compliance – Workgroup Conclusions/Recommendations:

Short Term:

Grays/Chinook:

1.

Elochoman/Skamokawa:

2.

Mill/Abernathy/Germany:

3.

Long Term:

Grays/Chinook:

1.

Elochoman/Skamokawa:

2.

Mill/Abernathy/Germany:

3.

General

4.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Adaptive Management – Monitoring Needs

Discussion:

- Smolt monitoring on Elochoman
- Monitor impacts of low flow conditions at mouth of Elochoman and potential predation issues.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Adaptive Management - Workgroup Conclusions/Recommendations:

Short Term:

Grays/Chinook:

1.

Elochoman/Skamokawa:

2. Evaluate contribution of summer steelhead program to Columbia and tributary fisheries.

Mill/Abernathy/Germany:

3.

Long Term:

Grays/Chinook:

1.

Elochoman/Skamokawa:

2.

Mill/Abernathy/Germany:

3.

General

1. Implement sufficient monitoring of hatchery programs.

Research – Research Needs

Discussion:

- NOAA ocean fisheries research should be supported.

Research - Workgroup Conclusions/Recommendations:

1.

Outreach & Education - Identify Opportunities

Discussion:

-

Outreach & Education - Workgroup Conclusions/Recommendations:

- 1.

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

SHORT TERM		
	Topic Category	Recommended Action
Grays/Chinook	Natural Production	•
	Artificial Production	
	Fisheries Management	
	Regulatory Compliance	
	M&E, Adaptive Management	
	Research	
	Outreach & Education	

SHORT TERM (Continued)

Elochoman/Skamokawa

*Natural
Production*

•

*Artificial
Production*

•

*Fisheries
Management*

•

*Regulatory
Compliance*

•

*M&E,
Adaptive
Management*

•

Research

•

*Outreach &
Education*

•

SHORT TERM (Continued)

Mill/Abernathy/Germany	<i>Natural Production</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
	<i>Artificial Production</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	<i>Fisheries Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	<i>Regulatory Compliance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	<i>M&E, Adaptive Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	<i>Research</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	<i>Outreach & Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
General	<i>Natural Production</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	<i>Artificial Production</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	<i>Fisheries Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	<i>Regulatory Compliance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

	<i>M&E, Adaptive Management</i>	•
	<i>Research</i>	•
	<i>Outreach & Education</i>	•

LONG TERM		
	Topic Category	Recommended Action
Grays/Chinook	<i>Natural Production</i>	•
	<i>Artificial Production</i>	
	<i>Fisheries Management</i>	
	<i>Regulatory Compliance</i>	
	<i>M&E, Adaptive</i>	

	<i>Management</i>	
	<i>Research</i>	
	<i>Outreach & Education</i>	
LONG TERM (Continued)		
Elochoman/Skamokawa	<i>Natural Production</i>	•
	<i>Artificial Production</i>	•
	<i>Fisheries Management</i>	•
	<i>Regulatory Compliance</i>	•
	<i>M&E, Adaptive Management</i>	•
	<i>Research</i>	•
	<i>Outreach & Education</i>	•

LONG TERM (Continued)

Mill/Abernathy/Germany	<i>Natural Production</i>	• •
	<i>Artificial Production</i>	•
	<i>Fisheries Management</i>	•
	<i>Regulatory Compliance</i>	•
	<i>M&E, Adaptive Management</i>	•
	<i>Research</i>	•
	<i>Outreach & Education</i>	•
Genera	<i>Natural Production</i>	•
	<i>Artificial</i>	•

	<i>Production</i>	
	<i>Fisheries Management</i>	•
	<i>Regulatory Compliance</i>	•
	<i>M&E, Adaptive Management</i>	•
	<i>Research</i>	•
	<i>Outreach & Education</i>	•

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